

## Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

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INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

S E C R E T SEOUL 3001

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UNGA, KS, US

SUBJECT: KOREAN QUESTION AT THE UNGA

REF: STATE 087398

BEGIN SUMMARY: AMBASSADOR CALLED ON FONMIN PARK TONG-JIN APRIL 22 TO FOLLOW UP FONMIN APRIL 9 CONVERSATION WITH SECRETARY ON KOREAN ITEM AT 31ST UNGA AND TO SEEK FONMIN'S REACTION TO SECRETARY'S REQUEST THAT ROKG RECONSIDER ITS POSITION. FONMIN SAID PRESIDENT PARK REMAINED UNCONVINCED ROKG SHOULD PUT UP STRONG FRIENDLY RESOLUTION IF NORTH KOREA AGAIN TAKES KOREAN ISSUE TO UN. AMBASSADOR AGREED TO DOUBLE CHECK POSSIBILITY OF JOINT RESTATEMENT OF FOUR POWER CONFERENCE PROPOSAL. END SUMMARY.

1. PARK BEGAN BY EXPRESSING APPRECIATION FOR SECRETARY'S RECEPTION AND NOTING THAT AGREEMENT WAS REACHED DURING DISCUSSIONS ON DESIRABILITY OF AVOIDING FURTHER DEBATE ON KOREAN ISSUE IF AT ALL POSSIBLE AS WELL AS NECESSITY MAINTAINING ARMISTICE IN ABSENCE FEASIBLE ALTERNATIVE. HE THEN TURNED TO BASIC DIFFERENCE IN OUR TWO POSITIONS; WHILE HE HAD GREATLY APPRECIATED SECRETARY'S STATEMENT THAT USG PREPARED TO MAKE "MONUMENTAL EFFORT" ON KOREA'S BEHALF AT FORTHCOMING UNGA, HE STILL DOES NOT UNDERSTAND NECESSITY OF RISKING POSSIBLE DEFEAT AT 31ST OR SUBSEQUENT UNGA SESSION PRIOR TO BACKING AWAY FROM

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UNGA DEBATE AND DECLARING UNGA "IRRESPONSIBLE". PARK SAID HE

TOLD SECRETARY UNGA HAD ALREADY PROVED IRRESPONSIBILITY BY PASSING CONFLICTING RESOLUTIONS AT LAST SESSION, AND THAT EVEN IF WE WON THIS YEAR POINTLESS, DRAINING DEBATE WOULD GO ON IN FUTURE WITH LONG TERM OUTLOOK PESSIMISTIC. FONMIN INDICATED THAT SECRETARY HAD NOT DIRECTLY REPLIED TO THESE POINTS AND HE IMPLIED THAT POSITION TAKEN BY SECRETARY SOMEWHAT SOFTER THAN REPORTED REFTEL.

2. COMMENTING AT THIS JUNCTURE AMBASSADOR REVIEWED POINTS IN REFTEL RECORD OF CONVERSATION, STRESSING SECRETARY'S VIEW THAT WE COULD NOT LEAVE FIELD TO DPRK DURING THIS SESSION. NOT ONLY USG BUT OTHER CORE GROUP MEMBERS AGREED THAT FAILURE TO INTRODUCE FRIENDLY RESOLUTION RISKED SERIOUS DEFEAT AND EVEN SOME PREVIOUS SUPPORTERS AMONG EUROPEANS MIGHT NOT SUPPORT ROK EFFORTS. AMBASSADOR REITERATED SECRETARY'S REQUEST THAT FONMIN INFORM PRESIDENT PARK OF HIS VIEWS AND THAT PRESIDENT RECONSIDER ROKG POSITION.

3. PARK SAID HE HAD IN FACT DONE SO, BUT THAT PRESIDENT PARK AND HE HIMSELF WERE STILL NOT CONVINCED OF EFFICACY US PROPOSED APPROACH. DIFFERENCE WITH US ON UN GREW OUT OF GREATER CULTURAL DIFFICULTY KOREANS HAD IN ACCEPTING VOTING DEFEAT. PRESIDENT PARK PERSONALLY HELD VERY STRONG VIEW THAT ROK SHOULD QUIT WHILE STILL IN COMFORTABLE POSITION, HOWEVER, IF SECRETARY BELIEVED THAT WHATEVER RESULT AT 31ST UNGA WE COULD REFUSE FURTHER DEBATE BEYOND THIS YEAR, THEN PICTURE WOULD BE DIFFERENT. BUT PROSPECT OF ENDLESS, DESPERATE FIGHT WITHOUT PROMISE OF SUCCESS NOT AGREEABLE.

4. AT CONCLUSION THIS PORTION CONVERSATION, AMBASSADOR POINTED OUT THAT IF IN LAST ANALYSIS KOREA DID NOT CHANGE ITS POSITION IT WOULD LEAVE ITS ALLIES AND SUPPORTERS IN VERY DIFFICULT POSITION. THERE WAS STILL TIME TO CONSIDER TACTICS, BUT TIME FOR DECISION ON KEY POINT OF DIFFERENCE APPROACHING, SAID AMBASSADOR. HE THEN STRONGLY URGED ONCE AGAIN THAT FONMIN DISCUSS MATTER FURTHER WITH THE PRESIDENT WITH VIEW TO CHANGING ROK POSITION. PARK AGREED TO DO THIS, THEN IN ONLY CONCESSION TO OUR VIEWS AFFIRMED THAT FUNDAMENTAL ROKG PHILOSOPHY WAS TO COOPERATE WITH ITS ALLIES, AND THAT ROKG WAS NOT PROPOSING TO GO ITS OWN WAY. STILL PARK SAID HE AND PRESIDENT PARK NOT FULLY CONVINCED

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AS TO MERITS US APPROACH.

5. IN COURSE CONVERSATION AMBASSADOR ALSO MADE POINT THAT WE DID NOT BELIEVE ROKG SHOULD TAKE INITIATIVE OF ITS OWN AT THIS TIME REGARDING FOUR-POWER INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, RATHER US WISHED REITERATE THIS PROPOSAL ITSELF AT AN APPROPRIATE TIME; ROKG SHOULD CONFINE ITSELF TO REITERATION ITS CALL FOR NORTH/SOUTH DIALOGUE. WHILE ROKG WOULD NOT INSIST

ON TAKING NEW INITIATIVE ITSELF PARK SAID, HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO REPEAT FOUR-POWER CONFERENCE PROPOSAL TO PROVIDE FRIENDLY SIDE WITH PROPAGANDA AMMUNITION IN ITS CURRENT EFFORTS TO WIN SUPPORT FOR AVOIDANCE FURTHER DEBATE AT UNGA. FONMIN SAID ASSISTANT SECRETARY HABIB HAD PROMISED CONSIDERATION OF SOME FORM OF JOINT REITERATION OF FOUR POWER CONFERENCE PROPOSAL. IF THIS NOT FEASIBLE WHEN DID US PLAN TO REITERATE PROPOSAL, PARK ASKED? WHILE STICKING TO POINT THAT WE THOUGHT IT BEST TO CONTINUE MAKING THIS PROPOSAL OURSELVES, AMBASSADOR AGREED TO DOUBLE CHECK POSSIBILITY JOINT RESTATEMENT OF PROPOSAL.

ACTION REQUESTED: WOULD APPRECIATE GUIDANCE RE PROPOSAL FOR JOINT RESTATEMENT OF FOUR POWER CONFERENCE AND IF NOT CONSIDERED FEASIBLE SOME INDICATION LENITE MIGHT REITERATE PROPOSAL OURSELVES.  
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